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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3334
INFO RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/DTRA ALEX WASHINGTON DC//OSAC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 000601

SIPDIS

STATE FOR ISN/CB, VCI/CCA, L/NPV, IO/MPR,
SECDEF FOR OSD/GSA/CN,CP>
JOINT STAFF FOR DD PMA-A FOR WTC
COMMERCE FOR BIS (BROWN, DENYER AND CRISTOFARO)
NSC FOR LUTES
WINPAC FOR WALTER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/05/2019

TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [CWC](#)

SUBJECT: CWC: SELECTION OF THE NEXT OPCW DG: RESULTS OF
THE FIRST STRAW POLL

REF: A. STATE 103181
[1](#)B. THE HAGUE 597
[1](#)C. THE HAGUE 584
[1](#)D. THE HAGUE 518
[1](#)E. STATE 89303
[1](#)F. THE HAGUE 451

Classified By: Janet E. Beik for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

This is CWC-58-09

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: The selection for the next Director-General (DG) of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) moved forward today after the first informal straw poll of Executive Council (EC) members. Results of the straw poll indicate a distinction between three candidates in the lead, another candidate in the middle and the other three candidates at the bottom. EC Chairperson Ambassador Jorge Lomonaco (Mexico) is waiting for candidates to start withdrawing before announcing how he plans to proceed before and during next week's EC session (October 13-16). END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (SBU) On September 29, Lomonaco convened a brief meeting to update delegations on his "confessional" consultations. Lomonaco announced that he had met with all but one of the 41 EC members and that there were clear, consistent trends across the board with no regional variations on delegations' preferences for candidates. After these "confessionals" Lomonaco approached each candidate or their selected representative to share information he had gleaned relevant only to that specific candidate; he stressed that he did not advise anyone to withdraw but merely provided them an indication of their support, or lack thereof. As no candidates had chosen to withdraw by September 29, Lomonaco announced his intention to hold an informal straw poll on October 5 for all EC members to indicate their rank-ordered preference of each of the seven candidates.

[1](#)3. (C) On October 5, Delrep Beik cast the ballot for the U.S. per instructions (ref A). All 41 EC

members and a number of non-EC observers attended the meeting. Before voting, Lomonaco gave a brief explanation of how voting would work, and he announced the five monitors (one nominated from each regional group): Canada for the Western European and Others Group (WEOG), Malaysia for the Asian Group, South Africa for the African Group, Croatia for the Eastern European Group and Costa Rica for the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC). While most EC delegations finished voting within 20 minutes, Lomonaco held voting open until the Nigerian Ambassador showed up -- 50 minutes after the meeting's start -- and cast her ballot.

¶4. (C) The meeting then paused for just over an hour to allow the five monitors to tally the ballots and assign points to each candidate based on their ranking. Each candidate received 7 points for being ranked first, 6 points for second, 5 points for third, and so on to 1 point for last place. The counted ballots and tally were presented to Lomonaco in a sealed envelope to be retained by the Technical Secretariat in case any delegation asked to inspect ballots and for an historical record. Costa Rican Ambassador Francisco Aguilar announced that all members of the Council had voted and there were no invalidated ballots. Form ballots had signatures which were Qballots. Form ballots had signatures which were torn off so that all ballots remained anonymous.

¶5. (C) Aguilar then announced the number of points given to each candidate in the straw poll, as follows:

- Ahmet Uzunmcu (Turkey): 225
- John Freeman (UK): 203
- Peter Gottwald (Germany): 192
- Benchaa Dani (Algeria): 151
- Sudjadnan Parnohadiningrat (Indonesia): 129
- Anton Thalmann (Switzerland): 129
- Aapo Polho (Finland): 119

Following the results announcement, Lomonaco adjourned the meeting. He previously had said that he wanted to allow delegations and candidates time to "reflect" on the straw poll results before proposing further course of action.

¶6. (C) Del comment. The vote was much closer than many expected and reflected the clean split between the top and bottom tiers of candidates. Uzumcu's lead likely reflects broader regional support than Freeman or Gottwald. Del fully expects another round of straw polls before next week's EC session, either on Friday (October 9) or next Monday (October 12).

¶7. (U) BEIK SENDS.
LEVIN